

# Invocation

Good afternoon, and welcome to the graduation ceremony for the class of 2019! Congratulations are in order – first, to the seniors, for working so hard over the last few years to get to this point; second, to the parents, host parents, siblings, aunts, uncles, and grandparents of the graduates, for your constant support and love, which proved an invaluable resource for the students, especially when times were the hardest. Seniors, you look wonderful today – beautiful, handsome, whichever of those two you’d rather be, you are.

My job here today is to give the invocation. Invocation comes, as everything does, from Latin; it means to “call into,” or to “summon.” Since you are all sitting down here, my job is already done. This provides me with the unique opportunity to give the students the greatest graduation gift of

all: listening to me speak for another minute or two.

I could use this time to give words of encouragement, to tell them that we believe in them and we will always be there for them and that we know that they have the tools and the strength to get past any obstacle life puts in their way, which is true. Or I could give them life advice, learned from my 115 years worth of experience on this planet, like “if you want to be great, be great; if you don’t want greatness, be good; if you don’t want to be good, be a math teacher.”

But I think my words perhaps don’t mean as much as the words of others. After all, what do I know? I know that in my first year at SGS I felt incredibly fortunate to get to teach such wonderful people. I know that I’ll miss you all when you go off on your adventures. I know that I, and the

other teachers and administrators here, will always be here for you if you need any help, whether it’s math advice or life advice, or a shoulder to cry on or to punch.

Perhaps nobody said it better than my second favorite American philosopher, Justin Bieber, when he said that “Put your tooth under your pillowcase/No, I won’t, I won’t ever, ever let you down/Like a seesaw lets you down you know why/Cause we ain’t on the playground no more.” Now to be honest, I have no idea what that means. But I hope that you do, and that you find comfort, or wisdom, in this quotation, and that it inspires you to do great things.

Congratulations again to the class of 2019! Thank you.

– Jonathan Rowland,  
Upper School Math Teacher

**On the Web**  
See more Graduation photos and video at [www.sgs.org/magazine](http://www.sgs.org/magazine)



**The Class of 2019 on Graduation Bridge before the start of the ceremony on May 31.**

**Crossing Graduation Bridge like every SGS grad of the past 60 years**

